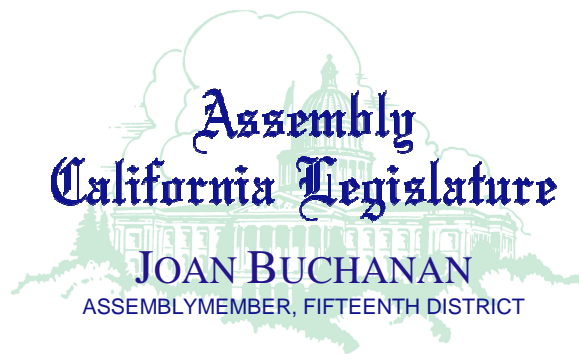


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November 30, 2009

Mario Manzo
Bureau of Reclamation
2800 Cottage Way, MP-730
Sacramento, CA 95825

Re: Comments Submitted to the US Bureau of Reclamation about the Draft
Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for the 2-Gates Fish
Protection Demonstration Project –

Dear Mr. Manzo,

The 2-Gates Fish Protection Demonstration Project will result in significant impacts to the ecology, the economy and the quality of life of the residents of the Delta. The Draft Environmental Assessment focuses on the construction phase and the area immediately adjacent to the proposed gates, ignoring many serious concerns about the Project.

With reference to the Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), I am submitting the following comments based on meetings with numerous constituent groups:

- **Aesthetics.** The Draft states “Old River is identified as a scenic waterway ...” The gates, lighting and activity connected with them do not belong in a scenic waterway.
- **Air Quality** – The Draft focuses on construction related emissions. Attention should be given to the emissions from boats waiting to go through the gates and the additional distances that boats must travel to avoid the gates both during and after construction.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality** – The Draft does not give attention to the issue of water quality in the south Delta. Adequate water flows are essential to ensure proper water quality in communities such as Discovery Bay. The Project operation will change the flows; this should be addressed.
- **Public Services** – Marine patrols and emergency response will be adversely affected by the gates. Accesses for barges and heavy equipment needed in the event of levee repair should be addressed. The Draft does not give adequate attention to these concerns.

- **Recreation** – The Draft states “Boating is the only recreational activity that will be affected by the Proposed Action.” This statement underlies the lack of understanding and focus on the impacts that will be caused by the Project. The Delta is a community with many waterfront homes where boating is a way of life. It is inappropriate to dismiss this impact.
- **Socioeconomics** – The Draft states that economic effects of the Project will be minor. In fact, the economic impacts of the Project would be significant and far reaching. The Delta economy relies heavily on marine and other boat serving businesses that will lose business during construction and over the long term as boats avoid the delays and safety concerns with the gates. In communities such as Discovery Bay, residents depend on convenient access to their homes by boat. Property values will be adversely affected if access is impaired. This issue should be thoroughly evaluated.
- **Transportation/Traffic** – Delta residents rely on the waterways for travel to and from their homes and in the course of their business activities. Delays of 2 to 2.5 hours are a significant impact on transportation.

Cumulative Effects – The Draft states “Impacts to most resources will be highly localized and temporary ...” In reality, the impacts would be broad and long term. The Draft Assessment does not adequately address the real impact of the Project on the Delta. The National Research Council has begun a study of the environmental problems in the Delta, with an initial report due next March. The conclusions of this study should be made a part of the EIR/EIS for the 2-Gates Project.

Every hydrologic change in the Delta has resulted in more damage to the estuary. A more rigorous environmental review and permitting process for the 2-Gates Project that includes a full EIR/EIS should be done. This would provide the Delta, its communities and all Californians with the assurances to which they are entitled.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joan Buchanan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joan Buchanan
Assemblymember – 15th District